

# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

RANDY G. MASSEY  
ACTING UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

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Nine Executive Drive, Fairview Heights, Illinois 62208, Telephone (618) 628-3700

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For Immediate Release

**April 28, 2006**

## **ELDORADO WOMAN INDICTED ON METHAMPHETAMINE CHARGE**

Randy G. Massey, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on April 18, 2006, a Federal Grand Jury returned an indictment charging **KATIE R. HEATH**, age 27, of Eldorado, Illinois, with conspiracy to manufacture, distribute, and possess with intent to distribute over 500 grams of methamphetamine in Saline County and elsewhere in the United States. The indictment alleges the offense occurred between January 2000 and August 2005.

*An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.*

The charge carries a penalty of a minimum term of 10 years and a maximum of life imprisonment, up to a \$4 million fine, and a term of at least 5 years' supervised release to follow incarceration.

The indictment was unsealed after HEATH was arrested on a federal arrest warrant Thursday morning in a pre-dawn sweep. She appeared in United States District Court in Benton today to be arraigned on the charges. HEATH was remanded to the custody of the United States Marshal pending individual detention hearings which was set for Wednesday, May 3, 2006.

The investigation leading to the charges was led by the Carmi office of the Southern Illinois Drug Task Force with the assistance of the Illinois State Police, the Multi-Agency Drug Enforcement Unit of the Saline County Sheriff's Department, the Harrisburg Police Department, the Eldorado Police Department, the Saline County State's Attorney's Office, and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys James M. Cutchin.